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# LETTER OF JUDGE CHAMBERS, TO THE CITIZENS OF KENT.

*To my Fellow-Citizens of Kent County :*

UNWILLING to have my conduct so far misrepresented as it has been, in relation to certain matters of late occurrence, I have to ask your attention to the following narrative:

On the day after the Meeting at the Court House, on the 5th of February last, I left home for Cecil Court, and after being there for a week, went to Baltimore, and was there detained another week. On my return, I found the columns of the *Kent News*, issued during these two weeks, teeming with offensive remarks, which apparently indicate a deliberate purpose to place me before you in such a position as to lessen your respect for my character and judgment.

Why such an effort should be made, may well be thought strange by those acquainted with the fact, that there is no office in the gift of the Government that I would accept, and that I have had nothing to do with either the Democratic or the American party. Whether personal enmity has thus sought an outlet, by insidiously inflaming the excitement everywhere existing, and artfully directing it against me, you must decide. It requires less cunning than falls to the lot of some men, to know that a wise discretion, or a calm judgment, is not the peculiar characteristic of a community in the highest state of fermentation.

How far the facts of the case sanction the statements made, or the political heresies imputed or inferred, it is my purpose now to demonstrate.

The first published declaration of my views on the pending crisis, was in the copy of an answer to a letter received from an old Friend in Boston, who had asked me to express them. See "*Kent News* of 8th December last."

It was not only considered sound doctrine, but I was asked by the Editors to allow my name to be given as the author, that it might have more effect than an anonymous production. If that letter was censured by any member of either the American or the Democratic party, I am yet to learn the fact. It not only escaped censure, but received warm commendation from sundry persons who have since found it expedient to use quite different language in relation to similar opinions, or subsequently published.

Now, in that letter, these points are distinctly taken—

1st. That the North had, for a series of years, pursued a system of aggression on our property and our feelings, and perilling not only our persons but our lives.

2dly. That the continuance of this system involved, as an obvious necessity, sooner or later, resistance by the South, and actual collision.

3dly. That this state of resistance and collision, although prematurely precipitated, and regretted, was now actually upon us, and must be met, and could only end in concession by the North, or the separation of the South.

4thly. That in the event of such separation being forced upon the South, Maryland most certainly would go with the South, or with the Border States.

No sane man can fail to find all this in that letter.

Some time after this, a meeting of the Citizens of the County, perfectly irrespective of party, was called, and held on the 8th January last. With a full knowledge of my views, and with a perfect knowledge that I was the author of that letter, I was urged by the members of that meeting—all parties uniting in the request, to preside. The Committee that called upon me, consisted of gentlemen of the Democratic, the American, the Breckenridge, the Bell and the Douglas parties.

I addressed that meeting, and expressed exactly such opinions as my letter contained. The remarks then made were well received, and as far as I knew met with universal acceptance.

Amongst the Resolutions at that meeting, passed, as the *News* stated, by acclamation, will be found embodied the same sentiments. All this while my course was commended, and you will look in vain to the columns of the *News* for any censure. We differed honestly and with perfect charity about the advantage of a Convention. I thought and aid the most likely means of composing the existing difficulties would be to have agents, discreet and prudent men, with full authority to represent the State, who should meet and confer with similar representatives from other States, particularly the Border States, and conceive some plan or basis of settlement—such authority could only be

given by a Convention. At the same time, I was perfectly willing to admit the equal sincerity and patriotism of those who differed with me, as I knew some of my best friends did. At the meeting of the 8th January, a large majority expressed, on this point, an opinion different from my own, and I challenge any man to say he ever heard me impeach the conduct or the motives of any one voter on that occasion.

I repeat, then, except in regard to this honest difference of opinion as to the best mode of accomplishing what we all aimed at, not one word of exception was heard as to my addresses or resolutions, but on the contrary commendation was expressed, certainly in the *News*.

Now, in what particular have my addresses or resolutions made and offered since that time been changed or altered? I defy the worst enemy I have to point to any. I addressed a meeting in Kent on the 5th February, another on the 9th, another in Baltimore on the 18th. No truthful man who heard them will say they expressed any different sentiment. And yet now it seems good to some folks to *sneer* and *insinuate*, and falsify my course. Some writer in the *Kent News* expends column after column in fault finding. Apparently unwilling to make a direct assertion, boldly and like a man conscious of speaking the truth, and disclaiming any purpose to impute "intentional unfairness," the writer talks of my "*managing in a very extraordinary manner*;" how correctly will be seen presently.

The meeting which I attended on the 5th of February was called by a number of us, for the purpose of appointing delegates to the Conference Convention to be held in Baltimore.

One of our Resolutions expressly limited the authority of that Conference Convention, to propose to the people the question of a Sovereign Convention, not to "call a Convention," as many of you have been made to believe—but simply to propose that the people, meaning a majority of all the legal voters of the State, should say whether a Sovereign Convention should be convened.

Surely, if the people of the State want such a Convention, they have a right to convene it. But how are their opinions to be known? only by submitting the question to them—inviting them to express their opinions.

Exactly as the Union Meeting of the 9th February was got up. A few gentlemen proposed to the Union men of Kent to meet at a certain time and place.

To this invitation they could respond by coming, or by declining to come—and when they came they could do what the call proposed, or decline it.



Indeed this case is stronger, inasmuch as here the call invites the people to meet—assuming their willingness, without previous consultation with a majority of them, whereas no Sovereign Convention was to be held until after a majority of the voters had sanctioned it.

From the date of this call, the venom of the writers for the *News* seems to have been in a state of active fermentation; and I regret being obliged to say, has been indulged at the expense of truth, in regard to facts which could not be unintentionally perverted. The man, whoever he may be, that intimated unfairness or covert design, and he who sneakingly insinuated, by putting in the mouth of "*some persons*," that I made a *Secession speech*, as well as he who would have his readers suppose my address, then, or at any time, breathed Union sentiments, "here and there" only, and of course was of an opposite character everywhere else—these persons, I am obliged to believe, wilfully and deliberately designed to express what is not only not true in point of fact, but what was at the time known to them to be untrue. If these were the only instances of injustice and untruth, a large amount of charity might palliate the offence, but these writers have committed the same perversions of fact in other respects, where it would seem to be impossible to mistate, except by design. The person who prepared for publication the proceedings of the meeting of the 9th February, has not permitted the resolution there offered by me to appear as part of those proceedings. That resolution was left in the hands of the presiding officer, and as he has informed me, was passed over with the other papers, to be arranged for publication. There has been "a heap of talk," and no small amount of writing about it. Why not publish it?

I have, since my return, procured the original, of which here is an exact copy:

*Resolved*, That while we declare our devoted attachment to the Union, as the source of our multiplied blessings, religious, political, social and personal, and our utter unwillingness to unite with what we regard as unwarranted attempts to separate from it: We yet feel bound to declare, that if the North persistently refuse to accord to us, in common with our Sister Slave States, the practical security for our property which the Constitution contemplates and demands, we must in that event unite our fortunes for weal or for woe, with our Sister Border States of the South.

Now, the essence of this is simply, that if the North persists in refusing to us our *Constitutional Rights*, and only in that event, the honor

and dignity of the State demand of us not to submit, nor longer remain with them. Who will dare openly express the contrary opinion? The president of that very meeting, Col. Ricaud, whose opening speech is so justly commended, used the precise expression—remain in the Union as long as the Honor and Dignity of the State permitted. Dr. Valk expressed the same sentiment, and has not everywhere the same language been held by every one? Governor Hicks says, “after allowing a reasonable time for action on the part of the Northern States, if they shall neglect or refuse to observe the plain requirements of the Constitution; then, in my judgment, we shall be fully warranted in demanding a division of the Country.” “The South can honorably take such steps as patriotism and honor may demand, either in or out of the Union.” Again, he says, “I will be the last one to object to a withdrawal of our State from a Confederacy that denies to us the enjoyment of our undoubted rights.” Again, “Believing that the interests of Maryland were bound up with those of the Border Slaveholding States,” he had been engaged in correspondence, &c.

Once more, “If we find hereafter that the North shall, after due deliberation refuse to give them (guarantees to the Border Slave States,) we will in a united body demand and receive a fair division of the National Domain.” How is it that all the time Governor Hicks is the model of a pure patriotic Union loving man, the object of the highest admiration, while I am the object of the severest rebuke, and censure for holding the same opinions? Has any of the *News* writers charged him with “arraying the South against the North”—“and arguing with force what *some* were uncharitable enough to say savored of secession doctrine.” Was he asked if his meaning was “that we have been living degraded and dishonored?” “Does he mean unless Congress pass some law about the Territories, we should go out of the Union?” and others of like character, all which it was of course intended the reader should understand as vile heresies, affirmed by me. Was Governor Hicks taunted with the question “what has the ‘National Government’ done to cause it to be destroyed?” and with the limping concession—as of the *only* offence by the Northern States—that they have acted outrageously and shamefully in passing “personal liberty bills,” with the immediately following salvo however, “Rhode Island has repealed hers, and other States are about following her example.” So far from it, the Governor has been the theme of unmeasured praise, and the air has been made vocal, by cheers and shouts, from these identical persons, who are pursuing me with an apparently determined purpose to deprive me of all claim to your confidence. I have instanced

the opinions expressed by Governor Hicks, and might transcribe similar opinions from every meeting held through the State—numerous as they have been, and of every distinguished man who has spoken—save only the meeting in Kent, on the 9th February, and one of the speakers at that meeting. What says Mr. Harris, the respected member of Congress, representing Baltimore, from whose late speech the *News* has given large extracts, in which he says he is “a Southern man—born so, and proud of his nativity,” “my State” says he, “is a Southern State.” “Her sympathies of blood, of sentiment, of geographical position; her large possession of slave property, equal to 40 millions of dollars, the interests of trade between her commercial emporium and the South, amounting in the last year to over a hundred million of dollars out of an aggregate of \$168,000,000; the great interests of her manufactures, of which forty-five million went last year to the South and the South-west from the city of Baltimore alone: all these give weight to the Southern sentiment of her people”—he tells them of the conservative character of our people, and their devotion to the Union, yet he tells them, if they think that the State can be held in that poise by their *talking*, “they misread the record of the times,” and “he believes this statement will apply with equal force to every one of the Border Slave States of the Union.

Now this is commended in this same paper, and far be it from me to deny the justice of this commendation, yet it is quite a natural question, why so heartily praise sentiments exactly similar to those which draw down upon me such a measure of wrath, as can only be satiated by some two or three columns of questions, intended to put my opinions in the most odious light, and consequently forfeit my claims to your respect?

The favorite theme is “Convention is Secession,” the Conference Convention in Baltimore is a “Secession Convention.” It is an easy matter, especially with some persons, to give abusive epithets instead of sound argument. There is no more reason to designate the Baltimore meeting of the 18th a Secession meeting, than there is to call the meeting in Kent, of the 9th an abolition meeting. The *News* says, some of the members of that Convention certainly are Secessionists. It may be so. Is it not equally certain that some of those present, and most noisy at the meeting of the 9th, were abolitionists, some who are for remaining with the North, whether we be kicked, cuffed, degraded and dishonored or not? That Convention has had its session, its proceedings are made public, and the great complaint now is, that it did not do any mischief. Reasons for its forbearance, very satisfactory to such complainants, are manufactured by themselves. They are just as



ridiculous as the complaint itself. The simple state of the case is this. That Convention was intended to put before the people, the majority of the legal voters of the State, the important question, whether it was proper to convene a Sovereign Convention, so as to place Maryland in the most proper position to deal with the existing crisis. Before the day of meeting, some of the members had received such information as to induce the belief, that the Governor of the State would, by proclamation, propose this very measure. The Convention, believing that the action of the Governor would secure the co-operation of many citizens, who would not otherwise promote the object they aimed at, and being desirous to adopt every means by which a full and fair expression of the popular Will could be had, resolved to adjourn to the 12th of March to allow time for the Governor to act, at the same time endorsing the proposal of the Governor, should it be made as expected. Is there any thing criminal in this? One would think, if he made the tirades in the *News*, his only source of knowledge, that to give the people an opportunity to say whether they would or would not have a Convention, was an overt and direct act of treason. I had supposed the people were the Sovereign power, and more, that there is, just now, no other power in the State, having competent authority to meet the present exigencies of the distracted country. Now suppose these Convention haters should some of these days, find a proclamation of the Governor, calling this so called "Secession body," in other words inviting the people to express their wishes in regard to it, will they have him impeached as a "Traitor," or will they take the back track and confess with becoming humility, either that they have been guilty of gross slander, or that what is very wrong, when suggested by some other person, is a very right thing, if suggested by their friend? If the Governor shall issue such a proclamation, it will no doubt be to increase the chances of harmonizing and settling the difficulties that threaten a total rupture of the Union, and as the best means of preventing other States from separating, and to bring back those that have seceded; or at all events to avoid civil war and the shedding of blood.

And is not this exactly what has been the object of those of us who are denounced? At the meeting of the 5th February I stated, as presiding officer, that these were understood to be the objects of the meeting. Emphatically it was said to *preserve the Union*. Did any one intimate a contrary opinion?

Our resolutions are perfectly consistent with such a purpose, and not one word was said, not one thing done to contradict these declarations. Yet that meeting is persistently denominated a "Secession" meeting.

Is it possible to suppose the man who says this, knowing the facts, believes what he says?

Again, at the meeting of the 9th February, I stated the object of the Conference Convention to be to *preserve* not to *dismember* the Union, and that our authority, by the very terms of the resolutions passed on the 5th, was limited to the giving an opportunity, to the whole people of the State, to say, whether they would or would not have a Convention. The idea seems to have got into the brain of these writers for the *News*, that because at a meeting of the citizens of Kent a "majority of 148 to 87" determined it was inexpedient to call a Convention, therefore it is treason, or secession, to enquire what opinion is entertained by the citizens of other parts of the State. The opinion of Kent is always entitled to great respect, but it is rather too much to claim for it the power to silence the other counties and cities of the State. All this nonsense then, as to the Secession character of the meeting of the 5th in Kent, and that in Baltimore on the 18th, is obviously an affectation, and so far as made to reflect upon me as presiding officer, and thereby injure my standing with you, must have some concealed and ulterior motive. If there could be any doubt about this would it not be dissipated by what has occurred at and subsequent to the meeting of the 9th February?

The published call for that meeting invited all lovers of the Union and the Constitution. Time and again, it has been the boast of its friends, that while that of the 5th was *exclusive*, this invitation embraced *all*. Of course I was invited. I entered the hall and took a seat "low down"—several of the gentlemen, whose names were attached to the call, kindly urged me to take the seat I usually occupy, near the stand, and I did so. The meeting being organized, the presiding officer, "Col. Ricand," made an excellent address—a committee was appointed and immediately retired—Dr. Valk was then called out and made a speech, which was very well received, and in which I do not recollect any thing at which offence could be taken. The committee returned with their resolutions, and Mr. Vickers made a very long speech, from notes in his hand—apparently very full notes. In the course of this speech, the meeting of the 5th, of which I was president, was denounced as a Secessionist meeting; the Conference Convention, then to be held on the 18th, to which I was a delegate, was denounced as of the same stripe, and the *precise number* of Slave holders, "*men, women and children*," so emphatically and minutely stated, as to leave no doubt on my mind, that the census returns had been diligently examined, with a deliberate purpose to use the fact in his address, and this statement of the small

number of Slave-holders, men, women and children, was immediately followed by the question, emphatically addressed, "*have all the other citizens of the County no rights to protect?*"

To this speech I felt it my duty to reply, and presuming, however erroneously, that I had as much right to the floor as any other present, permission was asked for a hearing. The formal notice of the proceedings, in the *News* of 16th February, does not make the slightest allusion to my remarks, or resolution, nor is my name mentioned in it.

It seems, however, from what is said in the Editorial part of the same paper, "it might have been supposed my remarks would not have been listened to at all." However that is, the meeting heard me, and so far as I could perceive, respectfully. I avowed myself as much a lover of the Union as any one present, vindicated my course, and that of the meeting of the 5th, from aspersions cast on it; and attempted to prove that it was calculated, as it certainly was intended, in the most effectual way to heal the distractions that now prevailed, claiming the authority of the Virginia precedent, especially as printed cards had been industriously circulated, to urge those to whom they were addressed to come up, without fail, to celebrate and hurra for "glorious Virginia." I also rebuked, what appeared to me to be, an attempt to array the other portions of our citizens against Slave-holders, telling them, what I verily believe, that they can have no worse enemy than the man who should set at variance the different classes of society—that all were essential, as elements, without which we could not exist—Judges, Lawyers, Doctors, Carpenters, Butchers, and all sorts of trades and business, and that to quarrel with and injure each other, was as fatal in the body politic, as a quarrel and fight, between the different limbs of the human body, would be to the natural. I also took occasion to express my utter dissent to what appeared to me the tenor of the last mentioned speaker, that the future of Maryland must be determined by a regard exclusively to her *pecuniary interest*.

I thought and said that at least some share of regard was to be had to the honor and dignity of the State; that no individual, or community, could live in harmony with others, who were daily and hourly villifying and abusing their conduct, and their feelings, depriving them by force and fraud of their property, and offering violence to their persons; that degradation and disgrace could no more be *submitted* to by the State than by individuals.

On taking my seat, the president instantly rose, and, alluding to my statement that I had been personally assailed, disclaimed, in terms the most flattering, any purpose to impeach my character or conduct as a



pure and patriotic citizen—the difference between us being as to the proper mode of meeting the crisis, and he differing *most decidedly* with me in regard to the propriety of a Convention. Dr. Valk then made a similar disclaimer, of any design to say any thing offensive to me, expressing like confidence in the purity and sincerity of my intentions. It is but an act of justice to add, that nothing had been said, by either of these gentlemen, which was considered by me as offensive, or as arising from any unkindness of feeling toward me, nor was it in reference to either of them I had alluded to an assault which I deemed it my duty to notice.

Mr. Vickers then again addressed the meeting, urged the importance of “money considerations,” the necessity for it when the collector came for his taxes, and various other matters, but did not disclaim or reply to my remarks about arraying one class of citizens against another.

The resolutions were then read as reported, and adopted. Immediately on its being announced that they were carried, I offered the resolution, of which a copy has been hereinbefore given. I stated to the meeting that just before leaving my office, this resolution had been prepared, to be offered only in the event of the failure of the Committee to report something of the kind, and finding nothing like it in their report, and believing it proper the feeling of our State in this respect should be fully known, I had now to submit it, and could only anticipate its passage, without the slightest opposition. Having been explained, the resolution was put to vote, and to my utter surprise, but a comparatively small number of voices were heard in favor of it. I rose at once, considerably excited, and said, surely there was some misunderstanding—that I could not believe there could be picked out of Kent County, such a number, or any considerable number of its citizens, who would reject such a proposition, if understood; it was in short, that we would go with the South and not with the North, *provided* the North persisted in denying us those *rights which the Constitution gave us*, and concluded by asking a division. The chair requested those who were in favor of the resolution to stand.

To my amazement, a very large majority continued sitting, amongst them, I observed several of those who had signed the call for the meeting. I then left the room, under the impression that the political atmosphere was not a very healthy one. Some one in the *News*, next following this meeting, has attempted what professes to be a statement of the facts. It would seem as if some apology were deemed necessary for a vote, that I confess my previous opinion was, would have passed any where in this State, except at an abolition meeting. Excuse seems



to be thought necessary by this gratuitous and veracious *fact* stater. The gentleman who prepared the proceedings for publication, adopted the wise course of "keeping dark." The resolution was not noticed, persons who only know by what they learn from that notice in the *News*, would be utterly ignorant of what was done by the meeting, in relation to it, in fact would not know from those published proceedings that any resolution had been offered by me.

But it is very certain, some of the fast friends, who participated in that meeting, and voted for the resolutions of the Committee, were excited and incensed at the treatment of this resolution. It would not do therefore to "shy" it altogether. Hence the garbled statement alluded to, and other comments in the *News*.

One would judge from these, that I was an indelicate intruder, a person, who it might be expected, would not be allowed the privilege of any other, the most unimportant person present.

Why how is this? How does it comport with this boasted notion of an invitation to all? I professed to be as ardently attached to the Union and the Constitution as any of them—the writers in the *News* do not deny this, then why should I be refused a common privilege?

But "the resolution was kept in his pocket until near the close of the meeting instead of being handed to the Committee, as is the usual course," thus "managed to *say the least* in a very extraordinary manner." Now this will induce any casual reader to suppose that other resolutions were offered in the meeting, that the opportunity to offer mine was afforded, and neglected, until all the work of the Convention was so far ended as to make the time particularly unfit and inappropriate, when it "was *suddenly sprung* upon the people." Now each of these assertions the writer must have known to be untrue. No invitation was given to any one to present resolutions, to go to the Committee, not a resolution in point of fact was so offered. The Committee as soon as named were asked to retire, the resolutions I presume were "cut and dried," prepared beforehand, and no opportunity occurred when this one could with propriety be offered, until the report of the Committee was received and acted upon. My resolution was written just as I was leaving my office, with the ink scarcely dry; was taken up in my hand, and put into my hat, when it was placed on the desk near me, the paper seen, I have no doubt, by many around me. It was impossible for me to know what the Committee would report, not being consulted or advised with by any of the gentlemen who signed the call. If the Committee had reported such a resolution, mine certainly would not have been presented, as I stated to the meeting. Of course this could

only be known when the report was read. After reading that report, the first question of necessity was on adopting it, no other proposition was in order, except to amend, alter or substitute--this was no part of my purpose: not doubting that the passage of these was a foregone conclusion. I did not say one word about them, except to decline voting. As soon then as they were discussed, and voted on, and not one moment before, the proper time arrived for any additional resolution to be offered, and at that time precisely this was offered. Now the *News* writer knew all this, just as well as any one else, then why use language to deceive, and mislead his readers into the belief of a statement just the reverse of the truth?

As to the "Secession doctrine" which *some* were uncharitable enough "to say I had argued," intending thereby insidiously, but irresponsibly to assert it, as also the poor excuse that I was a delegate to the Conference Convention, these items of charge have been disposed of, nailed to the counter as base coin. A further apology is found, by this self-constituted organ, claiming to know all opinions of this very large majority of five-hundred persons, in the fact, that "the time had not arrived to decide," and "others had not made up their minds." The first objection should have led to a suggestion for delay, to postpone; but not one individual of the five-hundred intimated such a course, or such a reason for it; and as to the last, it is, I believe, a slander upon the good people of the county. Long after these political troubles had commenced, I had heard of but one individual in our community--of course, avowed abolitionists, are not included, who was willing to express his preference to go with the North if compeled to secede. There are others now, I am aware, and I fear there are those who are endeavoring to instil, and extend this abominable notion. But that there are any considerable number of our citizens, willing to remain with the Northern section of the broken up Union, even when that North shall "persistently refuse to accord to us the practical security for our property, which the Constitution contemplates and demands." I do not, and will not believe.

Let it be remembered, that this is the resolution, not only a simple question of going to the North, or the South, in case of seperation, but a going to the North after a "persistent refusal by it of our *constitutional rights*."

In short, the question is, to live at the last end of a Northern Confederacy, degraded, dishonored, and disgraced, as we must be if we *submit* to the deprivation of our rights plainly given by the Constitution, while every other Slave State shall have indignantly spurned such

a humiliating connection. The people are not ready for this! If they be not muzzled by persuasion, that *party ties* require them to suppress their honest impulses; if they be not deceived by artful leaders, who have concealed, ulterior, and mischievous objects in view, they will, I am still persuaded, be willing, in a calm moment, to denounce the notion of abject submission, under such circumstances, to the dominion of admitted oppression—and not in the alternative, not to be “chained to the car of South Carolina,” as the writer falsely intimates—but as in the express language of the resolution, to go with “our sister Border States of the South,” glorified Virginia and Co. Yes, my fellow-citizens, I will yet believe that the blood of our sires is still so far uncorrupted by venality, that whereas *they* were willing, and ready, to stake their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor in defence of their country’s rights, we are not so degenerate as to sell ourselves for a price, into degradation and disgrace. How then could any sane man regard this as a “firebrand” thrown before the meeting? A firebrand is something destructive, dangerous, calculated to create alarm. Is there anything in this resolution of that character. It was not the first time the citizens of the county had been invited to consider this matter. A resolution passed by acclamation on the 8th January, had expressed the same thing. It was *then* all right—why all wrong, why a firebrand, a month after? The same remarks which apply to the charges against me, and the criticism on my addresses in Kent, may be made in answer to those against my address to the Convention in Baltimore. Read it, I beg you, and see if *you* can find fault with it. I have received warm and strong expressions of thankfulness, for its conservative tone, from those who had been made to fear mischief from that body, but it was reserved for the paper at my home, or those who write for it, to find in it the elements of heresy, secession, and treason. And to do this the more effectually, facts are perverted, assurances made to the public are rejected, bad motives are gratuitously assigned, and opinions sanctioned by you by acclamation, and entertained in common by those who are regarded as model patriots, are taunted with equivocal interrogatories, and a defence of Northern aggression, which cannot but result from some latent purpose. An ingenious effort is made, to shift responsibility from the Northern States to the Federal Government. You are triumphantly asked, “what has the General Government done? “Did not Mr. Fillmore enforce the fugitive slave law by military force,” &c. &c. Now, our complaints are not of what is done at Washington, except as to the encouragement there openly given to those, who in their



respective States, violate our rights, steal our property, and abuse our citizens. It is the people, and *States of the North*, of whom complaint is made. Do you not all know—every man of you—that our Slaves are constantly seduced to run away—that aid is continually furnished them by Northern people, to get beyond our reach—that when we pursue them, our people are mobbed by crowds of blacks and whites—that when these dangers are conquered, and a judicial decision had, they are seized and rescued by mobs, and their owners, or their agents, assailed with violence. Do you not know, that an agent has been consigned to the Penitentiary for aiding in the recapture of a fugitive slave—that Mr. Gorsuch and Mr. Kennedy were killed, in attempting to retake their slaves, and their murderers acquitted—and do you not know, that this is in harmony with Laws passed by State authority—not the work of a *few fanatics*, as some would have you believe—and do you not know, that when criminals have been demanded, as the Constitution provides, the Governors of States have determined not to surrender them, because in their States these were not regarded as crimes? Look at the late case of Anderson, who committed the murder of his master, who resisted his escape, and the English jurists say he had a right to kill his master if he interfered with his attempt to escape. Are you to be insulted after all this, with the question, what wrongs have you suffered, because at the tail of the question the words by the General Government are appended?

Yes, it is true Mr. Fillmore faithfully performed this, as he did all his duties—he enforced the arrest and delivery of Burns in Boston. Why did the *News*, by its silence, screen the North from the merited disgrace of this case? Why not tell the whole truth, and inform its readers that Judge Loring, the officer who had the courage and the honesty to do his duty, was ignominiously degraded from the Bench, of which he was an ornament, for this very act—not another charge against him? And it is with such folks that we are to remain, when kicked, cuffed, degraded and dishonored; to whom we are to submit, even when denied plain constitutional rights! No, my fellow-citizens, if such is the covert design of these long-winded columns, they will never accomplish the purpose designed. If the motive is to gratify a vindictive feeling against me, by these writers, to destroy the confidence, gained by a residence of more than three score and ten years amongst you, discharging as I hope you will agree, during all my adult life, the duties of my position, with integrity, if this be all, now to rob me of the just reward, of an honest life, the respect of the community, why I shall hope to



over live the attack: but if this is only the means by which your venality is to be excited, your manly feelings subdued, and your high sense of patriotic pride, and national honor corrupted, then let every man be wide awake to the insidious effort, and repel, with scorn and indignation, the first dawning of such a daring attempt to seduce you. Your interests and mine are precisely the same, and I feel quite convinced you will not be persuaded to believe I would do anything to harm you or the country.

Your fellow citizen,

E. F. CHAMBERS.

CHESTER TOWN; 5 *March*, 1861.

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